



WEST HARTFORD
198 Park Road, 2nd Floor
West Hartford, CT 06119
P: (860) 233-7623
F: (860) 233-7574

EMAIL: info@toxicsaction.org
WEB: www.toxicsaction.org

**Testimony of Jonathan Leibovic, Community Organizer, Toxics Action Center
Before the Children's Committee
In support of HB 6526, AAC Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children
March 5, 2013**

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Children's Committee:

My name is Jonathan Leibovic and I am a community organizer at Toxics Action Center. Toxics Action Center is a non-profit organization that partners with communities across New England to clean up and prevent pollution. We believe every person has the right to clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment. Since 1987, we have worked with over 700 grassroots groups to curb pesticide spraying, clean up leaking landfills, modernize our region's power plants, and give ordinary people the tools they need to improve the health of their communities.

You all are on the Children's Committee, so I'll assume that you all have the best interests of children at heart. Obviously, it is in children's interests not to be poisoned when they are drinking from sippy cups, playing on play-grounds, or trick-or-treating. It is in children's best interests to avoid harmful chemicals whenever possible. And the good news is, it is frequently possible. Safer alternatives do exist, and more are being discovered and invented all the time. The scientific capabilities of our toxicologists and our chemists are growing every year. And consumer awareness about product safety is on the rise.

I commend the legislature for passing the ban on BPA in thermal receipts in 2011. That law will help reduce exposure of workers and consumers to this known endocrine disruptor, and it will benefit everyone in this state. It has also served as an example to other states. However, it should not be the job of the General Assembly to pass individual laws every year regulating individual chemicals in individual products. That would be a huge waste of time and taxpayer resources. What we need is a comprehensive framework for chemical safety and reform – and that's what this bill would provide.

Comprehensive chemical reform has not yet passed in Connecticut, in spite of the concerted efforts of groups and individuals including the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut, of which Toxics Action Center is a proud member. But the times are changing: Maine, Washington, California, and Minnesota have passed comprehensive chemical reform already. They have begun identifying dozens of chemicals of concern in hundreds of everyday products, and are working to replace them with safer alternatives. Fourteen more states, including our own, are considering bills like this right now. Bob Sump, a Republican state representative in Washington, said in 2008 that "voting against this bill is like voting against brakes on a schoolbus." I couldn't agree more. That bill passed, and with your support I hope this bill will pass in Connecticut this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. On behalf of Toxics Action Center and the whole Coalition, we look forward to working with you until this bill is passed.